

Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program  
**STATE PLANNING COUNCIL**

**Thursday, December 10, 2009**

William E. Powers Building  
Executive Dining Room  
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

**I. ATTENDANCE**

**Members Present**

Mr. Kevin Flynn, Chair	Representing Mr. Gary Sasse, Chair, RI Department of Administration
Mr. Jared L. Rhodes, II, Secretary	Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Daniel Beardsley	RI League of Cities and Towns
Ms. Jeanne Boyle	City of East Providence, Planning Development
Mr. Thomas Mullaney	Budget Office, representing Ms. Rosemary Gallogly
Mr. L. Vincent Murray	Town of South Kingstown Planning Department
Ms. Anna Prager	Public Member
Mr. Michael Rauh	Environmental Advocate
Mr. William Sequino	Public Member
Mr. Bob Shawver	Representing Mr. Michael Lewis, RI DOT
Mr. Henry Sherlock	Representing Mr. Stephen Cardi, Cardi Corp.
Mr. John Trevor	Environmental Advocate
Ms. Janet White-Raymond	Public Member

**Members Absent**

Ms. Susan Baxter	RI Housing Resources Commission
Mr. Thomas Deller	City of Providence Department of Planning & Development
Mr. Christopher Long, Vice Chair	Representing Mr. Timothy Costa
Mr. Peter Osborn, ex officio	Federal Highway Administration
Ms. Sharon Conard-Wells	West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation

**Guests**

Ms. Meredith Pickering	Senate Fiscal
Ms. Pam Sherrill	PARE Corporation
Mr. Mark Therrien	RIPTA

**Staff - Division of Planning**

Ms. Karen Scott	Principal Planner, Land Use
Ms. Dawn Vittorioso	Executive Assistant

**II. AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Flynn called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

**2. Approval of October 8, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

*Mr. William Sequino moved to approve the Minutes of October 8, 2009 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Janet White Raymond. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.*

**3. Transportation Improvement Program FY 2009-2012 – Amendment #4**

Mr. Rhodes began by summarizing the proceedings to date. Specifically he noted that:

- The proposed amendment includes changes to the approved TIP that have been proposed by both the Department of Transportation and Public Transit Authority.
- The amendment requests were received by the statewide planning program on October 30, 2009.
- The Department of Environmental Management had reviewed the proposal and agreed that an air quality re determination is not required.
- Notice of the hearing and of the opportunity to comment was published in the Providence Journal on 11/3/09 with subsequent distribution to the transportation mailing list and postings on the world wide web.
- The hearing was held by the TAC on December 3, 2009. A copy of the Public Hearing Report was distributed. (Please see attachment)
- Armand T. Lusi, of A.F. Lusi Construction, Inc & Richard Langseth of Greenwich Bay Watershed Group took the opportunity to offer comments during the Public comment period. (Please see attachment 1)

As there were no further questions, Mr. Rhodes introduced Mr. Robert Shawver. Mr. Robert Shawver next presented an overview of the RIDOT portion of the proposed amendment. A summary of his presentation is as follows.

- Rhode Island received \$137.1 million in ARRA funding for highway projects. When the TIP was amended in April 2009, 54 projects were designated for ARRA highway funding.

- RIDOT has worked quickly to implement these projects, and to date funding has been authorized for all but two 2 of the original 54 projects. Forty-two of the projects are underway with awarded contracts.
- Due to a favorable bidding climate, the estimated cost to implement the 54 original projects is \$12.4 million less than the ARRA funding provided. Of this \$12.4 million in savings, \$9.4 million has been realized from projects for which bids have been opened, with an additional \$3 million expected from savings from projects yet to be bid.
- This amendment proposes to reprogram this \$12.4 million in savings to other projects. These include: four 4 projects currently in the TIP for ARRA funding including 3 in the pavement management category and 1 in the bridge category; 1 enhancement project that is currently in the TIP; 2 new pavement management projects, 1 new enhancement project and 1 new drainage project that are not currently in the TIP.
- In addition the amendment proposes to replace one enhancement project with another at the sponsor's request and to change the name of the Engineering, Archeological and Program Support line item to Program Administration and increase the associated costs.
- Mr. Shawver distributed the Transportation Improvement Program 2009 – 2012 Report (Please see attachment 2)

In closing, Mr. Shawver requested that any further cost savings realized through the implementation of ARRA funded projects be reprogrammed to the I-95 repaving line item and directed interested parties to the complete RIDOT TIP Amendment #4 submittal for more details.

Following Mr. Shawver's presentation, the following questions were asked:

Ms. Prager, referring to the Downtown South Kingstown crosswalk, asked if the availability of funds dictated project priorities. Mr. Shawver provided an explanation of the projects that were placed on hold after funding was exceeded. Mr. Shawver then explained that this project was requested by the communities and it did not require design work. Therefore, it was considered a ready to go project. Mr. Flynn began explaining ARRA's two-year expenditure requirements for funding, and then said that the two-year timeframe will not be adequate for the design of innovation as valid projects. Mr. Flynn then he believes that a four-year expenditure would be not only be adequate for project design, but it would play an important part of the jobs economy. Mr. Sherlock agreed with Mr. Flynn and said it's a good idea to some projects ready to go; especially when other projects experience issues and at times come to a halt. Mr. Murray said that the project has been requested for several years, and then said that it was well-received by the community.

Ms. Prager asked if any additional funding remained for the contingencies to the remaining projects that have not gone out to bid. Mr. Shawver referred to the packet distributed (please see attachment 2) and said that DOT would use the regular program funds. Ms. Prager then mentioned that she heard that bids were coming in significantly lower than in the past. Mr. Shawver explained that the information is available in the packet, and then said there has been about a 15% decrease below the estimate in bids. Mr. Shawver said that 46 bids were advertised and 41 have been awarded; however, depending on the type of work, some bids came in higher. Ms. Prager then asked Mr. Shawver if he thought that the lower costs would start to dwindle. Mr. Henry then said that he believes the contractors are still eager for work. Mr. Shawver then asked Ms. Thibeault about the employment statistics to date. Ms. Thibeault said that at the end of September a report sent to the Office of Management and Budget indicated that 150 full time jobs were created. However, 1, 500 people have been paid for jobs ranging from police detail, DOT & contractors. Ms. Thibeault then said that she believes the number may be up to 1,700.

As there were no further questions, Mr. Flynn introduced Mr. Mark Therrien. Mr. Therrien began by explaining like most Transit Companies, RIPTA does not have shovel ready projects. Mr. Therrien

distributed the ARRA Tip Amendment (Please see attachment 3) and then began explaining some of the recent projects completed by RIPTA. A summary of his presentation is as follows:

- RIPTA just completed the re pavement project in Kennedy Plaza. As FTA will not accept grants without designs, ARRA money could not be used for this project. The construction portion, however, was paid with ARRA money.
- 60% of RIPTA money is spent on new vehicles. RIPTA will receive sixty three Hybrid busses in March. These busses will bring down the long-term costs and will improve gas mileage by 1.5 gallons per mile.
- RIPTA is concentrating on energy projects and they will replace the current roofing on the hundred year old building.
- RIPTA proposes to add \$1.0 million in FY2010 to Transit Operations as the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) has revised its list of ARRA eligible activities to include operation of transit services.
- Management and Project Administration would be funded in FY2010 at \$0.2 million to address the additional workload associated with managing ARRA funded projects.
- The Support Equipment / Supplies / Vehicles, Replacement line item is proposed for amendment to reflect FTA's award of a \$345,000 TIGGER grant which will fund energy efficient upgrades to the lighting in RIPTA facilities in FY10. \$200K will be saved with rebates.
- Improvements in transit corridors were originally included in the Facilities-Upgrade/Expansion category at a funding level of \$0.97 million in FY09. In order to provide a more accurate description, this project will be moved to a new TIP category, Support Equipment/Supplies/Vehicles – Corridor Improvements. Funding for corridor improvements will increase and be programmed at \$1.74 million in FY10.
- In the Facilities – Administration/Maintenance, Upgrade/Expansion category, RIPTA reduced the programmed funds to \$0.84 million in FY09 and FY10. The remaining funds would be allocated to transit enhancements at Kennedy Plaza and security improvements at RIPTA facilities.
- Support Equipment/Supplies/Vehicle, Preventative Maintenance funding will be increased by \$1.13 million for FY09 and FY10 in order to cover changes in the Kennedy Plaza repaving project and additional costs of the bus engine retrofits. Preventative maintenance funding will also be used to repair roofs and other structural elements of RIPTA facilities.
- Funding in the Support Equipment/Supplies/Vehicles, Replacement category will be reduced by \$0.48 million. Equipment that was previously programmed for ARRA funding will be instead funded with 5307 formula funds.
- RIPTA has been working to implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects for several years. This year RIPTA received favorable bids for a previously advertised ITS project, resulting in significant cost savings. In addition, RIPTA has also identified available funding in existing grants to fund ITS projects. The cost savings realized from these factors have allowed RIPTA to complete the previously programmed ITS projects without the use of the \$2.15 million in the FY09 TIP.

In closing, Mr. Rhodes pointed out the Public Hearing Report contains written comments from Mr. Langseth of Greenwich Bay Watershed Group and also a letter from MBTA.

*As there were no further questions or comments, Ms. Jeanne Boyle motioned to approve and Mr. Trevor seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **4. Committee Membership Expirations/Nominations**

Mr. Rhodes began by explaining that various memberships will soon expire for various committee members. Mr. Rhodes said that the process utilized last year will remain the same. Mr. Rhodes then explained that the listing of names for consideration has been revised as follows:

##### **Technical Committee Nominees**

1. Robert Azar, Chair – City of Providence
2. Michael DeLuca, Vice Chair – Town of Narragansett
3. Stephen Devine – Rhode Island Department of Transportation
4. Jonathan Reiner – Town of North Kingstown Planning Department
5. Chris Spencer – Town of Tiverton Planning Department
6. Ronald Wolanski – Town of Middletown Planning Department

##### **Transportation Advisory Committee Nominees**

1. Daniel Baudouin – The Providence Foundation
2. Kevin Dillion – RI Airport Corporation \*\*\*
3. Mark Caruolo – City of Warwick
4. Judith Drew – Governor's Commission on Disabilities \*\*\*
5. Robert Murray – AAA Southern New England
6. Robert Quigley, Vice Chair – Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
7. Paul Reynolds – Public Member, South Kingstown
8. Barry Schiller – Sierra Club, RI Chapter
9. Henry Sherlock – Construction Industries of RI
10. Frances Shocket, Chairwoman – Public Member, Jamestown
11. Jane Sherman – Public Member
12. Everett Stuart – RI Association of Railroad Passengers
13. Lee Whitaker – Town of East Greenwich

Mr. Rhodes explained that the Technical Committee appointments are listed the same as those initially distributed in the packet. Mr. Rhodes then said that the Transportation Advisory Committee is also the same with the exception of Mr. Kevin Dillion from the RIAC and Ms. Judith Drew from the Governor's Commission on disabilities.

Mr. Rhodes said that Mr. Dillion is a vital transportation role that the Airport Corporation plays within our state and Ms. Judith Drew was elected by the Governor's Commission on disabilities to fill the seat vacated by the passing of their former representative to the TAC, Mr. John McDonald.

At this time, Mr. Rhodes asked if there were any questions. As there were no further comments or questions, Mr. Rhodes explained that this will be on the Council's next agenda for further discussion and will be under advisement for one month and then it will be considered for final action at the next meeting. Mr. Rhodes then asked for a motion.

*Ms. Janet White Raymond motioned to approved and Mr. Beardsley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **5. Proposed 2010 Meeting Schedule**

*As there were no comments, Ms. Janet White Raymond motioned to approved and Mr. Sequino seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **6. Chief's Progress Report**

### **Transportation Report:**

Mr. Rhodes began by advising the Council that Ms. Karen Scott has been appointed to the position of acting supervising planner of the transportation section. In Karen's short tenure, she has demonstrated exceptional capabilities, and we are very pleased to have her working in this capacity.

Next, Mr. Rhodes stated that the Challenge Grants have been finalized. Mr. Rhodes explained that 29 proposals were received totaling \$1.7M with \$1M available. Mr. Rhodes then explained that after the staff reviewed and scored the applications, they were submitted to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee then made their recommendations to Mr. Flynn. Mr. Rhodes said the announcements have been mailed. Mr. Rhodes then said an award ceremony will be held on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> @ 4pm in the Atrium of DOA., and you all are invited.

Mr. Rhodes reported that the second round of funding for Safe Routes to Schools Program is underway and with \$2M for funding. Mr. Rhodes said that all the Municipal Planning Directors, School Superintendents and the Chief elected officials received a copy of the program and applications. Application materials are also available on our website. Mr. Rhodes said that the applications will be due by February 24, 2010. Mr. Rhodes then said that two workshops has been scheduled for December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. in conference room A. The workshops will cover items to be included with applications and as well as the formats for submittal. Mr. Rhodes added that is 100% federally funded and will not have any matching requirements associated.

### **Consistency Review / Comprehensive Planning**

Mr. Rhodes began by thanking the Council for approving the comprehensive planning assessment report last month. Mr. Rhodes said that the staff began drafting corresponding amendments to the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. Mr. Rhodes then explained that they have met with the Implementation Advisory Committee on three occasions to discuss what the amendments should be and how they should read. Mr. Rhodes then said that the Technical Committee has also reviewed the draft, and it is anticipated that the Council will review the draft legislation in January. Mr. Rhodes then said given the ramifications to all the municipalities, he looks forward to Mr. Beardsley's input.

Mr. Rhodes reported that Tiverton's five year Comprehensive Plan update was recently approved, and Johnston received their first State approved Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Rhodes then said that staff is in the process of reviewing Barrington and Bristol's five year Comprehensive Plan update and it is anticipated that these plans will be approved within the next month.

### **Land Use**

Mr. Rhodes reported that two staff members are drafting and updating three elements of the State Guide Plan simultaneously as follows:

1. The updates include the Watershed Plan; which would integrate the current Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan as well as the Rivers Policy Classification Plan.
2. Mr. Rhodes then said the second effort will be for the Water Supply Policies and Plan. We plan to take the two individual plans and integrate them into one plan; which will reflect the recent law passed relative to that subject area.
3. The last plan that will be worked on is the Energy Plan; which is also out of date. Mr. Paul Gonsalves from our Land Use section is working on this project with input provided from Mr. Ken Payne, Public Utilities Commission, The Economic Development Corporation, Coastal Resources Management Council and others; all of which will be relying on the Advisory

Committee to provide the primary direction. Once the Advisory Committee has a level of comfort, they will be reviewed by the Technical Committee and then to the State Planning Council for review and approval.

### **Geographic and Demographic Data Center**

Mr. Rhodes said that an application has been submitted to the Federal Government for the production for the Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) Digital Elevation Data. Mr. Rhodes explained this needed to be completed for the identification of transportation infrastructure that is susceptible to sea level rise over the coming years. Mr. Rhodes said that this is a one proposed application will be for all of New England. The State of Rhode Island cost of \$300K; which is contained in the current work program was approved by Federal Highway. Mr. Rhodes then provided a background of the basic deliverables.

### **Administrative Support /Other**

Mr. Flynn began by explaining that the Department of Planning is engaged into a memorandum of understanding with the Economic Development Corporation and the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island to be a partner in the development of the State's first statewide commercial real estate online database. Mr. Flynn explained that Northern Rhode Island has had some experience with this, but we have never had a statewide system, and we hope that within six months that we will have a statewide system of commercial real estate large and small, lease and sale link into the States GIS system.

Secondly, Mr. Flynn shared a process that is still in discussion stages. Mr. Flynn said the Economic Development Corporation asked the State to take the lead on a master planning effort for what they consider to be a critical economic development site. It is hopeful that we will take on two projects; which will require two dedicated Planning associates. The specific area of interest is a parcel located in the urban services area in Smithfield. Water and sewer services are available, and it is highway access accessible. We will work closely with the property owners, communities, and the State's DEM, and DOT agencies.

Mr. Flynn asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Ms. Boyle informed Mr. Flynn that East Providence currently maintains a database and then suggested that they touch base with the Jim Moran. Mr. Flynn said that Mr. Scott Gibbs will most likely be in touch. Mr. Boyle said that in the past, she worked briefly with Mr. Gibbs. Mr. Flynn said as there is a program in place now, Mr. Gibbs will most likely be in touch again.

At this time, Mr. Rauh said that Governor Carcieri and Director Sass talked about regional cooperation between municipalities. Mr. Rauh asked if it has been given any thought to how Division of Planning will provide assistance for local and regional levels. Mr. Rauh said Massachusetts currently has a grant program that will assist with planning at the local and regional levels and they share services. Mr. Flynn said that he is unfamiliar with the Massachusetts program. Mr. Flynn said the Division of Planning does provide assistance, and we have staff members are frequently in contact with local officials. Mr. Flynn said in terms of a regional agenda, we are supportive of Aquidneck Island and Washington County Regional Planning agencies through Challenge Grants and other means. Mr. Flynn explained that Aquidneck Island is doing a corridor study that is funded through a transportation study. Mr. Flynn said that a few communities operate without paid planning professionals. Mr. Rauh then said that three counties are collaborating and are sharing police dispatch services. Mr. Rauh said that it would be helpful to have someone with knowledge to facilitate these efforts. Mr. Beardsley said that once they are able to hire a social director, the RI League of Cities and Towns plan to assist communities and coordinate these efforts. He will then coordinate dispatching as Mayor Cicilline is looking to do. Mr. Beardsley said that each town operates their dispatching different. Mr. Rauh suggested that the towns

Approved  
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should publicize what worked when efforts were collaborated, and then said that it would be helpful to have Statewide Planning assist with the efforts. Ms. Boyle agreed and suggested Statewide Planning to serve as an ombudsman. Mr. Flynn said that we have two staff members from GIS assisting communities connect their maps. Mr. Flynn then said Bristol, Barrington and Woonsocket all received assistance from our GIS associates.

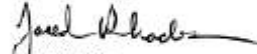
7. **Other Business**

None

8. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Jared Rhodes  
Secretary



Approved  
12/10/09

Attachment 1

State Planning Council  
Transportation Advisory Committee

Mr. Rhodes  
Draft Public Hearing Report

Approved  
12/10/09

Attachment 2

State of Rhode Island  
Mr. Shawver's Presentation  
Transportation Improvement Program  
2009 - 2012

Proposed Amendment 4 November 3, 2009 Report

Approved  
12/10/09

Attachment 3

ARRA Tip Amendment Project Adjustments  
Mr. Therrien's Presentation